

MILTON STIEFEL

Presents

JOAN CAULFIELD

and

JOHN PAYNE

In the Charles H. Russell Production of

“THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE”

by

John Van Druten

with

Jean Casto

Directed By

EDWIN GORDON

Production Designed by Don Finlayson

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— CAST OF CHARACTERS —

In the Order of Their Appearance

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JOAN CAULFIELD

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THE IVORYTON PLAYHOUSE

— THE BEGINNING OF AN ERA —

By 1930, the grand old theatrical institution known as "STOCK" had vanished from the scene. With the advent of the talking pictures, there was little doubt in anybody's mind that the once-popular stock companies with their fine groups of resident actors had become, once and for all, a thing of the past. This turn of events did not fit into the scheme of things for a young theatrical producer named Milton Stiefel. He was a young man of the theatre who wanted more than anything else to have a stock company of his own. He had long admired the successful accomplishments of such stock managers as Jessie Bostelle and Stuart Walker, and a position such as theirs was his vibrant ambition.

In the spring of 1930 Milton Stiefel was the General Manager for Maurice Gest. He had just finished a cross-country tour with Mr. Gest, and it was time for a vacation. Happily, friends invited him to Connecticut. One day as he was enjoying the luxury of leisure in the country, he took a ride around the Connecticut country side. He drove by an old silent picture theatre in a little community called Ivoryton. The charm of the setting, and the fact that it was a theatre caused Milton to stop. And an idea began to grow.

Theatre people are a strange lot. There is nothing in the world so much fun to them as their work. And Milton Stiefel is a man of the theatre. He loved the country, but he had begun to feel that it was time to get back to work in the theatre. As he stood there before the old silent picture theatre, he thought of the others in show business who must feel as he did. Why not get them together, and form a little stock company? If winter stock were dead, then, just for a lark, why not form a SUMMER stock company? And here in this lovely setting in the country was a theatre! They could have their cake and eat it! . . . They could summer in the country and still play in the theatre!

Everyone thought he was crazy. Who ever heard of a stock theatre in a little community not big enough to support a movie theatre? But Milton was a determined young fellow, and he found a group of actors who liked his idea. The first season opened that very summer. . . . 1930! They called it "THE

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CAST OF CHARACTERS (Continued)

BILL PAGE

played by

JOHN PAYNE

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ELEANOR & TOD GOULD

THE IVORYTON PLAYHOUSE

(Continued from Page 6)

IVORYTON PLAYHOUSE"; and the Ivoryton Players included WILL GEER, who was the youngest character man in the business; ISOBEL JEWELL, a young doctor's daughter who made a charming ingenue; the leading lady was VIRGINIA HOWELL; and the leading man was MICHAEL BARR. IRVING STIEFEL was the stage manager. For designer, Milton hired a young man name FREDERICK FOX.

The first play was "BROKEN DISHES." The price of admission was fifty cents and a dollar; although there were very few dollar seats sold at all that first summer. Friends in the community were a great help, though, and they managed to make an audience five performances a week for eight consecutive weeks. By the end of the summer, everybody in the company had had a wonderful time, and Milton Stiefel had lost money. No one expected him to be back the next season to indulge in this expensive folly.

Those who doubted that there would be a second season of summer stock at IVORYTON have long since forgotten that

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— SCENES —

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Friday Afternoon

Scene 2: Friday Evening

ACT TWO

Scene 1: Saturday Morning

Scene 2: Late Saturday Afternoon

ACT THREE

Scene 1: Sunday Morning

Scene 2: Late Sunday Afternoon

* * * *

The action, throughout, takes place over a weekend in early April in an apartment in the East Sixties, near Third Avenue, New York City.

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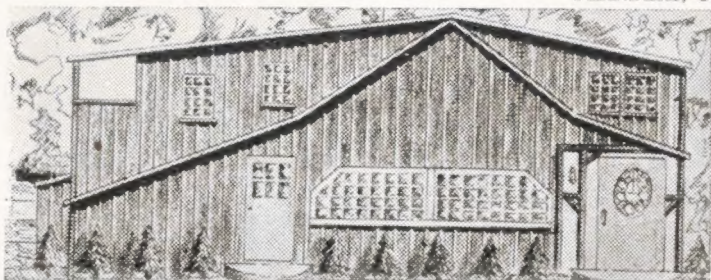
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THE IVORYTON PLAYHOUSE

(Continued from Page 8)

skeptical attitude. With the exception of the gasoline-rationed war years, there have been plays every summer since that historic first season in 1930 at the Ivoryton Playhouse. The managing director-proprietor-guiding spirit is the same young man who first had the idea of bringing plays to this little Connecticut community in the summer. The story of the playhouse's growth is not one of sudden popularity and success, however. There were many contributing factors. Each season brought a new reason for interest in this "quaint" idea of theatre in the country.

After the second season had started in 1931, a young lady arrived with a letter of introduction to Mr. Stiefel. She wanted to act, and he was casting a play called "THE CLIMAX" which was to feature Norma Terris. He needed an ingenue, and this girl looked like she had talent. She got the job, played the part, and many of her friends came from Hartford to see her. They liked her, and Mr. Stiefel liked her; so she stayed. She came back the next season, and after two summers of work with Mr. Stiefel, Henry Hull, Will Geer, and the others in the Ivoryton company, she decided that it was time to go to New York. She did, and she got a part in "THE WARRIOR'S HUSBAND." Her name was Katherine Hepburn, and the rest of her career is history.

In the meantime, talk of this "quaint little theatre in Ivoryton" grew, and more and more people came over to see what it was all about. . . .

(To be continued next week)